Satpal Ram

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

To meet Wikipedia's quality standards, this article or section may require cleanup.
Please discuss this issue on the talk page, or replace this tag with a more specific message. Editing help is available.
This article has been tagged since **August 2006**.

Satpal Ram was in prison for over 10 years, unjustly convicted of murder. It took over ten years for the Criminal Justice System to allow him any appeal, during which time his cause was taken up by a number of musicians, most notably the Asian Dub Foundation.

On 16th November 1986, Ram, who was 20 years old at the time, was eating with two friends in a Bengali restaurant in the Lozells area of Birmingham. A group of six white people arrived and shortly afterward started racially abusing the waiters, and complaining about the 'fucking wog music' that was being played in the restaurant. Satpal Ram became involved in the incident, by defending the waiters and supporting the music being played.

A fight developed. In the course of the argument, one of the group, Charles Pearce, smashed a glass on the table and stabbed Ram twice in his face. Ram claimed he was then pushed up against a wall with no means of escape, and that he used a Stanley knife to defend himself.

Satpal was provided with lawyers who refused to argue his case. They made him change his plea of self-defence to one of manslaughter. Most of the prosecution evidence came from the group that attacked Satpal. The all-white jury missed vital evidence because no interpreter was provided and found Ram guilty. The judge said he would interpret but he could not speak a word of the Bengali language.

The CCRC (Criminal Cases Review Commission) was given witness evidence from the Bengali-speaking waiters, including one not called at his trial, which Satpal's campaigners claimed supported his case that he was wrongly convicted in June 1987, and demonstrated he was defending himself against an unprovoked racist attack. His appeal to the CCRC questioned why the West Midlands police failed to make available interpreters to the waiters who witnessed the attack or translate their statements into Bengali before asking them to sign them.

Satpal Ram's case was supported by the Asian Dub Foundation (see the song 'Free Satpal Ram' on their album *Rafi's Revenge*), as well as Pitchshifter and Primal Scream.

On the 15th June 2002, it was decided by government authorities that they were holding Satpal Ram unlawfully, and he was released.

Retrieved from "http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Satpal_Ram"

Category: Cleanup from August 2006

- This page was last modified 22:40, 27 September 2006.
- All text is available under the terms of the GNU Free Documentation License. (See **Copyrights** for details.)
  Wikipedia® is a registered trademark of the Wikimedia Foundation, Inc.
- Privacy policy
- About Wikipedia
- Disclaimers